DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 069 437 PS 006 194

AUTHOR	Caldwell, Bettye M.
TITLE	Kramer School -- Something for Everybody.
INSTITUTION	Center for Early Development and Education, Little Rock, Ark.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Child Development (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	[71]
NOTE	34p.; A chapter of "History and Theory of Early Childhood Education," by S. J. Braun and E. P. Edwards
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	Bibliographies; Child Care; Child Development; *Compensatory Education Programs; Continuous Progress Plan; Disadvantaged Youth; *Early Childhood Education; *Educational Change; Elementary School Students; Family School Relationship; Home Programs; Intervention; Preschool Children; Preschool Education; *Program Descriptions; Teacher Programs; *Ungraded Schools
IDENTIFIERS	Kramer Project

ABSTRACT

A description of the Kramer Project to improve the general welfare of children and families is given. The purpose of the project is to provide age-appropriate developmental guidance from early infancy through the end of childhood years. The school, located in the heart of Little Rock, Ark., provides an educational program for children from infancy through sixth grade. It involves 250 children from 127 families and two foster homes. Approximately 150 additional families are involved through home visits and other research projects. Sixty percent are black. One-third are from families receiving some type of welfare. Components of the program include a comprehensive early childhood program beginning in early infancy; a dynamic elementary program offering continuity of developmental support; day care for all children who need the service; a broad research program in child development and education; a comprehensive array of supportive family services; and a training program for staff and students. Though the program is still in the experimental stage, it has engendered a great amount of interest. (DJ)

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

ED 069437

PS 006194

KRAMER SCHOOL--SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY

Bettye M. Caldwell [1,2]

There is an old journalistic slogan which suggests that the way to write a guaranteed best-seller is to write about God's mother's dog's flag. As each of these topics is in itself appealing, all of them together should be irresistible. In some ways, this formula applies to Kramer School -- or, more formally to the Center for Early Development and Education jointly operated by the University of Arkansas and the Little Rock Public Schools. We have come to be known as the Kramer Project because the public school in which our program operates is the Frederick W. Kramer School. We are content with this designation, as the label accurately describes our functional identity even if it does not connote our full range of activities.

Some Background Information

The Kramer Project came into being in 1969 through what was known as the "Special Facilities" grants program of the Children's Bureau. Each funded facility had to have demonstration, research, and training functions, and each had to relate in some way to the goal of improvement of the general welfare of children and families.

The author had previously directed a research-based day care and education program that offered comprehensive services to infants and young children and their families but which lost contact with the children when they reached public school age. During that time her conviction had grown that early childhood education would never significantly impact the children of America until it became part of public education. Also she was becoming increasingly aware that the chasm between early childhood education and elementary education had to be bridged. Accordingly she was resolved to try to help design a new program - a

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

special facility indeed -- that would provide age-appropriate developmental guidance from early infancy through the end of the childhood years.

A move to Little Rock, Arkansas proved to be propitious for the pursuit of that goal, as personnel in the Department of Elementary Education of the University of Arkansas expressed interest in the idea and established contacts with the administrative staff of the Little Rock Public Schools, who pledged cooperation provided outside funding could be secured. An agreement was reached to designate one of the Little Rock elementary schools as the project school for a period of five to seven years. Responsibility for implementing the program in that school would be shared by the director of the project and the principal of the school with the help of guidance offered by an Advisory Council consisting of representatives of the University, the school district, and the State Department of Education. For the better part of a year a planning committee (see Footnote 1) met to work out details of the project, and finally a proposal was submitted to and approved by the Office of Child Development.

Selection of a Project Site

The project school was to be one which: (1) was located in a section of the city likely to have a sizeable proportion of low-income residents; (2) had a racially integrated population; (3) was in reasonably good condition, and (4) had incomplete occupancy which would allow room for the early childhood units. There was really only one school in the community that met all of those criteria (except the one about being in reasonably good condition!) -- Kramer School, situated squarely in downtown Little Rock, built in 1895 of an architectural style that can perhaps best be described as "American Ugly." The neighborhood itself is very interesting. Although technically integrated, it

really contains assorted pockets of whites and blacks. It is surrounded on two sides by luxury hotels and apartments, and on the other two by a church and reasonably adequate housing. Around one corner is a fire station which every Wednesday at noon tests the city's civil defense sirens at such a decibel level that anyone having a tendency to audiogenic seizures had best go for an early lunch. One block distant is the city's Museum of Natural History, and just beyond that a beautiful art museum. Moving in another direction we cross a busy interstate highway which officially bisects the community into east and west (and our population into black and white). Moving in another direction we have the main hangout for the local hippie colony and the publication headquarters of the underground newspaper. In still another direction we find Little Rock's most famous house -- an ante-bellum mansion occupied by a gracious and alert 90-year-old woman who graduated before 1895 from the wooden school which preceded Kramer on its site and which burned down before the present school was built. In short, it is an interesting neighborhood, with many exciting things to see and do within walking distance. There is no comparable neighborhood in the entire city.

Kramer contains 13 classrooms plus an auditorium and a cafeteria and is considered a 300-child school. At the time the project was launched, there were only 150 elementary children in attendance. We have now added to that total approximately 100 children under six. This involves a total of 127 families and two foster homes. In addition to these children who are enrolled in the school on a daily basis, approximately 150 additional families are involved with the project through home visits and other research activities. Thus, altogether, the project touches the lives of approximately 400 children and their families. Of the total number of children, 60 percent are black and

40 percent are white. One-third of the children are from families receiving some type of welfare (AFDC, PA), and only three-fifths of the children reside in two-parent families. Sixty percent of the mothers are employed or in a training program. The modal occupation for both mothers and fathers is semi-skilled. Only 35 percent of the mothers and 59 percent of the fathers have a high school education or beyond.

Components of the Program

In Kramer we have blended together a number of program components, each of which in isolation would represent a worthwhile educational endeavor but all of which put together in the right combination represent something more -- an exciting program model worthy of consideration for adoption in other communities concerned with designing a school environment capable of meeting the needs of young children and their families.

What are these components that make Kramer a special school? No one in itself is unique, but, at the time the program was launched in 1969 (and even at the time of this writing insofar as the author knows), no school had put them all together in precisely this way.

1. A comprehensive early childhood program beginning in infancy. For over a decade now we have been aware of the importance of experience during the early years of life in enabling children to achieve their full developmental potential (Hunt, 1961; Bloom, 1964). During this decade early childhood education, always either a step-child or a petitioner for educational legitimacy, has gained a new lease on life. Experimental early enrichment programs (Gordon and Wilkerson, 1966) appeared in a few settings during the early sixties and, with the launching of Project Head Start in 1965, became available to large numbers of children in

PS 006194

America for the first time. Almost never, however, have programs for children younger than five been accepted as an integral part of public education.

Most of the new programs "backed down" gradually from public school entrance age which, depending on whether the state had public kindergartens, meant either five-year-olds or four-year-olds. An interesting paradox in this order of program development is that Hunt and Bloom were widely quoted as having marshaled evidence for the validity of educational intervention in this upper range of the traditional preschool years. Yet, Bloom's widely cited apothegm reminded us that approximately 50 percent of the development of a child's intelligence occurred by age four, not between four and five. Similarly, Hunt (1964) speculated that from about 18 months onward the social environment was particularly important in shaping the behavior of the young child. Had we not at that point in history been so justifiably phobic about the possibly deterious consequences of putting children younger than three into groups, more people would probably have moved promptly to design programs based on correct inferences from the data summarized by Hunt and Bloom.

These were especially meaningful in terms of conceptual analyses of early development of the situation of the young child from underprivileged backgrounds. It is during the early years of life that the child himself has the least capability of selecting or influencing his environment and is, at least physically speaking, a prisoner of his home environment. For years it was assumed that most home environments were equipotential in their pattern of influence during infancy and that is was only in later years that differential influence patterns could be detected. The absence of good descriptive data about the early home environment permitted this stereotype to persist. Now, however (Caldwell Heider, and Kaplan, 1966; Wachs, Uzgiris, and Hunt, 1971), we have evidence that, quite apart from any inherent dimension of "goodness" or

"badness," early environments contain as much diversity as is found in social and physical environments available to older children. It is in environments that we have come to designate by that curiously misleading term, "middle class," that those characteristics associated with developmental acceleration are found with greater consistency and in greater abundance. Quite apart from any argument as to whether home environments that lack these characteristics are deficient or simply different, one needs to be concerned with arranging for these characteristics if it can be demonstrated that young children need them in order to have an opportunity to develop skills and personality characteristics adaptive in the larger society to which all subcultural groups within a region belong.

Such is the strategy of the early education component of Kramer School. It is based on a literal reaction to the lines of evidence that give us a rationale for early intervention programs (see Caldwell, 1970), and that evidence unmistakably implies that the earlier the intervention the better. Although at this point in time we do not have <u>empirical</u> evidence (Caldwell, 1971) that enrichment efforts begun in infancy accomplish more than appropriate intervention begun later in the early childhood period -- say at age three or four -- in terms of the <u>theoretical</u> rationale for such endeavors the potential value of beginning during the earliest years cannot be ignored. Accordingly, Kramer does not involve backing down from first grade but rather moving forward from birth with activities designed to provide age-appropriate developmental supports.

In the early childhood component of our program, carefully arranged educational experiences are provided young children from early infancy right up to the age of formal entry into public school. (In Arkansas this is still

age six, as public kindergartens are permissible rather than mandatory and are available largely through private sources or through federally funded programs for children in low-income families.) From the age of six months onward this may be either in the form of home intervention offered on a biweekly basis or in the form of enrollment in the formal educational program offered on the school premises. For those participating in the on-site school program, enrollment may be either for half a day or for the full day, depending on the family employment situation. In terms of the amount of physical space available in the building and the size of the available staff, approximately 100 children can be enrolled in the school program.

One of the things that makes Kramer unique is that these 100 children younger than six go to school right in the same building with their older brothers and sisters. This, of course, has been true for public kindergarten for many years and even for pre-kindergarten groups (usually just four-year-olds, though occasionally including three-year-olds) since the establishment of Head Start. As Kramer is essentially a big cube holding up an assortment of the turrets and towers and gables considered architecturally stylish in its day, there are no separate wings into which the little ones can be secluded and no partitionable playgrounds that can be assigned separately to older and younger groups. Rather the classes for the younger children are geographically contiguous to those of the older children. The only exception to this arrangement is the contingent of babies, who, because of lack of suitable space in the main building that met fire and safety standards, attend in a portable classroom situated on the school campus. This immediate proximity of younger and older children facilitates many types of cross-age activities which, in a more architecturally ideal physical setting, might be arranged only with

difficulty. It means that two or three children from special education can help in the toddler room during snack time or lunch, that several kindergarteners can do the same thing for the babies, that the fifth graders can arrange and give a Valentine party for the three-year-olds, and so on. And, indeed, activities such as these are everyday occurrences at Kramer. It also means that when we have assemblies or special programs, the sixth graders can give the caregivers from Baby House a rest, and feel very grown-up and nurturant at the same time, by holding babies on their laps during the program. And it means that parents who are also encouraged to attend all such programs can gather together all of their young children and participate in the experience as a family group.

In terms of the static aspects of the early childhood part of the program, the children are enrolled in groups that are reasonably homogeneous in terms of developmental level -- babies, toddlers, threes, fours, and fives. There are 12 babies and 16 toddlers in the two youngest groups, and anywhere from 20 to 25 in each of the three remaining groups. The adult-child ratio is kept at 1:4 in the two youngest groups, 1:5 in the threes, and 1:6-8 in the two oldest groups. As absenteeism tends to be high in the youngest children, we deliberately over-enroll in both the baby and toddler units in order to avoid under-utilization of the facility.

If in our old building we had more open space areas we would encourage multi-age grouping more than we are now able to do. However, in many ways we had to design our program to fit our building, and our cube is divided into self-contained classrooms. In such a setting, activity and rest cycles correlated with age are hard to ignore, no matter how much one might wish to group children heterogeneously with respect to age. Last year, for example, we found ourselves in a disastrous situation with our infants and toddlers who were

together in the same portable classroom. One small bedroom containing six cribs had been partitioned off so that the younger infants in the group would have a separate place to sleep. On paper it should have worked. But what defeated the arrangement was the fact that most of the babies wanted to go to sleep around 11:00 or 11:30 a.m. -- which they were permitted to do -- whereas the toddlers were not ready for a nap until 12:30 or 1:00 p.m., by which time the infants were ready to get up and begin to play. In the absence of an area large enough to permit separate sleeping areas for both the early and the late resters, these incompatible activity cycles made it necessary to divide the infants and toddlers into separate geographic areas for the major home base assignments. However, in our setting it is easy to find opportunities to bring various groups together for parts of the day. In fact, all of the children except the youngest infants who come to school before 8:00 go into a common receiving area, and all who remain after 3:30 are regrouped into a heterogeneous age group where they remain until their parents come to take them home.

Because our entire educational effort, including our home intervention program, operates out of a public school, we have eschewed the labels "preschool: and "preschoolers." It seems rather foolish to speak of our toddlers as "preschoolers" when they attend school every day, just as do their older brothers and sisters. Also, as part of our conscious effort to unify the entire program and to break down the implicit chasm that all too often appears to separate early childhood education from elementary education, we did not wish to refer to part of the program as "school" and to another part as "notschool" (which is a logical translation of "preschool"). Occasionally, however, it is necessary to refer to that part of the program which deals with

children under six, and unless we wanted to remain unified to the point of semantic absurdity we had to come up with a descriptive phrase. Accordingly we refer to the children simply as "younger" and "older" and the program components as "preparatory" and "elementary." Although the term "preparatory" has within it some of the same contradictory elements as does the term "pre-school" (we are not technically preparing the children for school or life, as they are participating in school just as they are living life), it was the best compromise we could come up with at the time we needed a designation. We rather like it.

2. A dynamic elementary program offering continuity of developmental support. A few years ago many of us who were impassioned advocates for more early education made it sound as though we believed that enough programs would solve all of the problems of poverty, would eliminate school drop-outs, and would make equal educational opportunity more than empty rhetoric. By creative intervention during the early years of life, the child could possibly be changed in such a way as to make him thereafter more receptive to whatever educational fare might be forthcoming. This assumption rested on the translation of what has been called the "critical period hypothesis" into the field of human development (see Caldwell, 1972). As the early years were critical for supporting cognitive and motivational development, corrective programs instituted during this critical period would hopefully produce changes which would sustain the child through any subsequent experiences. When early evidence began to accumulate that it was not that easy (Karnes, 1969; Westinghouse Learning Corporation, 1969), some pushed the panic button and began to claim that the early experience was not critical after all. But, with the wisdom that comes with hindsight, it now seems naive to have assumed that a small

slice of enrichment early in the life cycle could have produced permanent changes. If behavior at any point in time is an integrated function of the individual's genetic potential, his pool of accumulated attitudes and skills, and of his current environmental situation, then it is fallacious to assume that one could ever expect the work of the environment to be completed.

The program implications of this point are obvious: no matter how effective an early enrichment program might be, it must be followed by exposure to an environment offering a proper match between the child's previous achievements and the experiences offered in the new environment. If children who do make substantial gains in an early childhood program are placed in an elementary program planned on the basis of previous expectancies rather than on the actual achievements of the children, then the same rate of progress should not be expected.

This continuity is the second major component of the Kramer program. Upon completion of the early childhood program, the child simply goes right on up the educational ladder. By conscious design the kindergarten and the first primary classroom are adjacent to one another, and some children move back and forth between the two areas for part of the day. In our setting this made more sense than having the two classrooms duplicate one another in certain respects. For example, there are several children in the kindergarten who, by any standards, are "ready" to learn to read. Likewise, there are a number of children in the primary who need a great deal of readiness work. Rather than either permit each teacher to ignore these indicators of developmental progress in the children or require each one to complicate her teaching strategy to accommodate the children whose deviation from the performance level of the remainder of the group is extreme, we have arranged a simple exchange. The main work period in the

kindergarten happens to coincide with the reading period in the primary classroom, so the kindergarten readers and the primary non-readers simply change places. The teachers on either side of the exchange remain alert to indicators that the arrangement is indeed providing a proper match for the children's continuing development, and change can be made quickly in the event it should be needed.

In limited space it is not possible to describe all components of our elementary program. The underlying educational philosophy is identical to that which guides the preparatory program. We have referred to our program as representing an ecological model -- i.e., one which is concerned with environmental design rather than curriculum development. Our ambitions for that environment are quite expansive. We want it to be one in which the children can develop maximally as integrated social-cognitive-emotional-physical-moral human beings -- in short, a supportive environment. Furthermore, we want them to be happy in the process, and we want their behavior to be so reinforcing to the teachers and other personnel in the school that their jobs are perceived as rewarding and fulfilling.

We conceptualize the school environment as consisting of human, physical, and temporal factors, all of which taken together comprise the ecological system of the school.

Human factors involve all the social interactions between adults and children, children and children, and adults with one another. They include the emotional tone of the interactions, the extent to which encounters between children and teachers will be pleasureable rather than painful, and whether they convey mutual respect and love or disdain and hostility. Physical factors include all the teaching materials and equipment and the arrangement of space in the school. Although we think of physical factors as being less important than the human

factors in the school, they do indeed set limits for program operation and must be given careful consideration in environmental planning. Temporal factors refer to the organization of events throughout the school day, to the way things are put together. They can thus be consonant or dissonant with the child's needs for activity and rest and with limits of attentiveness set by his own physiological maturity and style of reacting.

The ecological system of the school overlaps and must be coordinated with the ecosystems of the home and the larger community. One of our operating premises is that the greater the consistency among these ecosystems, and the greater the extent to which all encourage and support the same patterns of development, the easier will be the developmental task of the children. In all training endeavors, an attempt is made to help staff members think creatively about how these factors can be programmed to help the children progress at their optimal rates.

Our planning for the elementary program has been sensitive to the voices of responsible criticism of public education (e.g., Bruner, 1960; Cremin, 1961; Goodlad, 1966; Schaefer, 1967; Berman, 1968; Silberman, 1970). It might be described as currently lying about midway on a continuum ranging from a highly structured program on the right to a completely open program, and moving toward the left. Our task in the elementary division has been entirely different from our early childhood task. The latter program we developed and started; the former we have had to influence. It is not easy to change a school, as thousands of people who have tried in the past will testify.

We have been at the task for about 18 months at the time of this writing, and we have many tangible results to show for our efforts. The total elementary school is now non-graded, and there is considerable movement of children from

one classroom to another for participation in activities that might more appropriately match their interests and achievements. The old library has been converted to a Learning Center (similar to what is called a Media Center in most schools) where remedial work is offered in reading and math and where children can pursue interests individually. We have added an exciting and highly appealing physical education program and an art program. We have arranged weekly assemblies during which ethnically relevant and culturally enriching programs are presented with the children themselves involved in many of the programs. One classroom has been set up and called the Alternative Room. The activities of this room are highly fluid and last only as long as needed to trouble-shoot some particular problem. For example, for an entire semester it operated as a transition classroom for approximately half of the early primary children who were not able to respond to instruction in reading and math within the range appropriate for the remainder of the class and who were so volatile and impulsive as to need a more carefully controlled classroom and more behavioral supports in order to show developmental progress. This year the Alternative Room is being used for children who are simply unable to function in their regularly assigned home classroom, generally because of behavior problems. We find this an extremely valuable adjunct to the program and now wonder how any school can function without such a service.

Teaching activities for both elementary and preparatory divisions are guided by a lengthy list of objectives formulated in the areas of communication (reading and language arts), math, social living (social studies), and personal development. The objectives are stated in the first person and are intended to serve as progress reports to children and parents as well as teaching guides for the instructors. The lists of objectives are not considered to be exhaustive, as it

is expected that every creative teacher will permit the children to pursue their own individual interests in every aspect of the curriculum. Nor in many instances are they presumed to have been sequenced perfectly. Most emphatically, a stated objective is not expected to carry with it a prescription of how the objective is to be achieved. Quite the contrary. One of our instructional premises is that there is no one technique that will work with every child, and we are organizing a curriculum library around these objectives to provide hints as to multiple ways of approaching each objective. Furthermore, it is expected that, insofar as possible, achievement of the objectives should permit the child to take the initiative, with teacher intervention offered only as needed.

As stated above, we still have a long way to go in making our vision for the elementary division become a full reality. It will be some time before the full educational impact of the program can be understood. At this time, for example, we have achievement data on only one group of children who had participated in at least one year of the preparatory program and who have gone through at least one level of the elementary program. These children tested higher on a group IQ test than a comparable group of controls attending another Little Rock school but did not show any substantial acceleration in reading or math. We are convinced that there are dramatic differences in the children's attitudes toward adults and toward authority in general. Almost every visitor comments, for example, on how friendly and loving the children are to their teachers and other project staff members. As we are constantly monitoring their development in many areas, we will soon be able to substantiate what kind of change is occurring, how much and what type of this change is associated with participation in the early childhood component of the school and how much is due simply to changes being instituted at the elementary level.[3]

One of our most disconcerting problems is that there is less geographic stability in the participating families than we had expected. Recently, the Little Rock Housing Authority took over six square blocks that lie within our attendance boundaries, an act which involved 77 children enrolled in Kramer. An interesting comment on the extent to which the families perceive our program as offering them something of value can be found in the statistic that the families of 83 percent of the children under six found ways to continue to bring their children to Kramer, whereas only 20 percent of the elementary children were returned, even though in some instances a family might have been transporting younger children to the school. Granted that there are important reality factors in the situation (wanting children to establish friendship patterns in the new neighborhood, convenience associated with attendance at a school closer to the new address, etc.), we have interpreted this as indicating that as yet we do not have a community image of being an elementary school worth taking extra effort to attend whereas we apparently do have that image at the preparatory level.

3. Day care for all children who need this service. Those who are at all familiar with this author's point of view that day care can most logically and economically be expanded by establishing a liaison with public education (Caldwell, 1971a, 1971b) will not be surprised to learn that Kramer is an extended day school. The school opens at 6:30 a.m. and closes at 5:00 p.m., and all children of whatever age are welcome throughout that period. As would be expected, greatest use of the day care component is made by the parents of the very young children, although a number of primary children remain for the extended day. One of the criteria by which the appeal of the school for the children can be determined is that the great majority of them arrive by 7:30

to 7:45 in the morning, although school does not officially begin until 8:30. Breakfast is served to the early arrivals who indicate that they were not fed at home. In the late afternoon many children who do not actually need after school care remain in order to participate in the organized playground activities. The boys have had an opportunity to participate in a city Boys' Club intramural sports program, and, because of the expert coaching they receive from their physical education instructors, have walked away with most local sports trophies since the program began.

We had originally planned to use the surplus time in part to strengthen the cognitive program -- i.e., offer tutorial help, remedial classes, etc. During our first year we found out what we should have been wise enough to anticipate even without the experience -- tutorial help is not what the children want at that time of day. The older children in particular need to be active and free of too much supervision, and we have tried to accommodate those needs while still ensuring safety. The most popular late day activities are organized games and recreation, usually following a seasonal pattern, and art. Sesame Street happens to be telecast in our area in the late afternoon, and the younger children who remain late are encouraged to watch that.

The school is licensed as a day care facility by the Arkansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, and all the traditional day care supports are offered as a regular part of the program. In our early days we ran into some interesting problems associated with the fact that Health Department requirements are not identical in school facilities and day care facilities. Sometimes we could meet one but not the other, and, whenever there was any disparity, we were expected to meet the more stringent of the two. Reconciling such differences was actually a fairly easy job, however, and we heartily recommend more unions of this sort.

It has not been a marriage without problems, however. For example, when school holidays come around, it is always hard to remind the staff that the day care facility must stay open in order to be of service to our families. Similarly, those who must come to work very early can feel resentment when they see other staff members come in later and possibly leave earlier. Also, for the first year of our operation, it was hard to get across the idea that it was all right for the elementary children to remain after the formal school hours. In most of the schools across this nation, there is almost always one staff member whose duty it is to get the children out the door and off the campus as quickly as possible! It is not easy to break up old patterns such as this one.

New ideas usually sell themselves when they are recognized as offering something of value, and the day care component of the program has gradually won converts from among the traditional school personnel in terms of the service it offers. Before the project began, the principal used to come to work and find 50-75 children standing outside the door wanting to come inside, no matter what the temperature or weather. Similarly, in the afternoon, there were hazards associated with unsupervised play activities on the school grounds. Now the availability of qualified personnel to provide a program for the children early and late so that the regular teachers need not feel either guilty at not responding to the children or frustrated that they cannot plan and get ready because of the premature presence of children in the classrooms has convinced essentially everyone that all schools should offer extended day programs.

One final point should be made about the day care program. Unless their parents work so that there is no one at home to care for them, children are not encouraged to remain at school for the extended day. This applies to the younger

as well as the older children. That is, we have as a strong component of our philosophy the importance of strengthening family ties, and we do not wish to encourage dilution of parent-child contacts merely by the avilability of the extra school coverage. An occasional exception is made for children who especially need to be in the program whose mothers might decline to enroll them for a half-day only, claiming that it is too much trouble to get them dressed for such a short time!

As stated earlier, admission to Kramer was originally determined solely by geographic residence. Previously the population was well-balanced racially, but during the present year there has been a slight decrease in the proportion of whites in attendance. As we want to keep a population that includes a social class mix as well as a racial mix, we felt the need to enroll a few more middle class white children. Several of our teachers who were securing day care for their own young children elsewhere were very eager to enroll them in Kramer. We saw in their interest an opportunity both to be of further service to our staff and help maintain a racial balance. This is working so well that we would like to evangelize so that the service could be available to all young teachers. There is something very heart-warning about seeing a young mother-teacher go to play with her baby on her break rather than rush to the lounge for a cup of coffee.

4. A broad research program in child development and education. Reference was made earlier to the fact that the Kramer project is jointly sponsored by the University of Arkansas and the Little Rock School District. Although the university was obviously interested in the challenge offered by the opportunity to influence public education and participate in the endeavor to design a model school, the opportunity for the conduct of significant research in the setting

was an even more powerful determinant of university interest. In this paper it is not possible to give more than a brief description of the many research activities that are part of the project. They range from the macrostudy -- the development and evaluation of the impact of the total project concept -- to microstudies which may be carried out over fairly short periods of time and which deal with circumscribed questions of relevance for the total project.

The leitmotif of the research program concerns the influence of the environment on the development of the child. More specifically we are concerned with such research topics as: home factors influencing early learning, inter-relations among different types of learning (cognitive, social, emotional); the predictability of early performance; the development of internalized behavioral controls; naturalistic studies of classroom and home behavior; the relative effectiveness of different types of enrichment models; the development of a human relations program for the elementary school; the utility of pre-reading training designed to foster the acquisition of conservation; the development of a language laboratory for two- and three-year-olds; consonance and dissonance between values for young children espoused by parents and advocated by the school. Different people on the staff are responsible for the direction and conduct of the various studies, and reports will be forthcoming as the projects are completed.

We are especially pleased that our research is conducted as an integral part of the school program, not as an extra feature that has to be grafted on to the regular activities. A possible reason for this is our dedication to a fundamental policy relating to all research personnel: everyone, including the director, is expected to give some time to working directly with the children in a service capacity. All full-time research staff are required to spend at

least one hour per day in such work. This sharing of what the teachers clearly regard as the most demanding part of the work load helps create and maintain good morale and helps to keep teachers and researchers attitudinally on the same side of the fence. We feel that it helps to avoid the friction that can develop when one group is seen as "doing research" on the other group. This improved cameraderie is essentially a bonus from the policy; it was instituted primarily because of the director's conviction that one learns about children and generates researchable ideas only by interacting with them.

5. A comprehensive array of supportive family services. As would be expected from the description of the Kramer neighborhood, the school is not situated in a part of the city with cohesiveness among the residents and a strong feeling of community. Although the school is racially integrated (as are virtually all of Little Rock's schools, contrary to the national stereotype), the neighborhood is not. Rather it contains pockets of white housing and pockets of black housing, sections inhabited by stable, long-term residents, and sections where people come and go when the rent is due. In addition to the lack of cohesiveness, it is an area in which most of the mothers work. As the situation changes from time to time it is difficult to give a definitive figure, but about 75 percent of our mothers are employed most of the time. In one of our current classrooms, for example, we have one non-working mother, and in the Baby House all mothers either work or are in training. These data are mentioned at the outset to make it clear that it has not been easy to develop a dynamic family service program.

The staff assigned primarily to family-oriented work consists of two social workers, one school psychologist, and one aide. Within the project they are referred to collectively as representing "supplementary services." One of

the social workers handles the enrollment of children into the program, serving as an information officer who lets the parents know what can be expected in the school, fills vacancies when they occur, makes home visits both to obtain and to give information.

Internal duties involve such things as enrolling children in the program and maintaining contact with families on the waiting list, contacting families of chronically absent children (of whom we have very few), helping acquaint families with community resources that the family might benefit from, arranging for clothing and food distribution to needy families and coordinating periodic rummage sales, maintaining and operating a toy lending library, providing a school guidance service for all children showing learning or behavior problems, offering individual or group therapy to disturbed children, coordinating coffee hours for all parents -- and on and on.

But the supplementary service personnel also have duties which deal with the interface between the community and the families. Monthly meetings are held with a small group of parents who serve in the capacity of a "parent sounding board" (the group was originally designated by the formal title of Community Advisory Council). The purpose of this group is to bring to the attention of the family service worker who serves as chairman and thence to the project director any developments within the community that have relevance for the project. Although subtle efforts have been made to encourage concerns with the larger community, most of the topics brought up by this parent group relate to the school -- whether the teachers are too easy or too hard on the children, how the groups can be monitored as they walk to or from school, what can be done to improve the playground, etc.

In a program such as we have at Kramer, it is possible for family-oriented activities to touch many families lightly or a few with intensity. Although hopefully there is some impact in even the fairly superficial contacts we have with families in such activities as enrolling a child or checking on an absence, our own perception is that our pattern of significant influence involves a very small number of parents, mainly mothers. Essentially it is the same mothers who habitually volunteer to help arrange coffees, who turn up for the parent discussions, who sit on the advisory group, who check out toys for their children. From what we have read (Chilman, 1972) and heard from others engaged in similar ventures, most other programs have the same experience. How to reach the unreachable families remains a big challenge for the future.

6. A training program for staff and students. Our training activities may be divided into the traditional pre-service and in-service activities. As the school virtually never closes, it is difficult to find a time for the pre service program when all staff members can attend. We have managed to find this time in the late summer each year. This is a time when many families are away on vacation and when the need for day care is diminished. At this time the building gets a thorough cleaning and the floors are freshly varnished, and the staff holds a one or two-week training workshop. There are always some carry-over personnel and some new personnel, so in these training sessions an attempt is made to give new personnel short courses in the history and philosophy of the project and then have all participants consider together the important planning and learning and preparation that need to be undertaken prior to the fall opening.

The in-service training goes on throughout the year. To be on the staff of Kramer is to assume the attitude of a student -- we are all learning all

the time. This attitude appears to come rather easily to people in early childhood education, as, having been step-children of formal education for so long anyway, they tend to be a bit self-effacing and to assume that they cannot know anything very important! Facetiousness aside, in the author's experience, most teachers of young children appear to enjoy seeking new knowledge and trying to develop new skills. Our credentialing system makes things somewhat different with our elementary and secondary teachers -- they know how to teach, and they have certificates to prove it! And, of course, they are right. They do know how to teach, and the educational Cassandras who are crying out that they are doing everything wrong probably have spent precious little time in a classroom and have perhaps not coped without interruption for a single day with a roomful of children.

Even though this author does not consider herself to be a harsh critic of our school system, and though she decries dramatic declarations that our schools are sick, or dead, or are killing our children, the very idea of this project implies that somehow the elementary school must not be doing a good job or there would be no need to try to modify it in order to provide continuity of enrichment for the children who had been in the early childhood program. Thus it would appear that a social scientist might expect from the outset differences in the attitudes toward the project shown by the preparatory and the elementary teachers. To the one group, the idea of the project translates to the third ear as: "What we do is great. There is not a program in existence that gives enough children exposure to our talents and skills; therefore, we must develop such a program." To the other group the project concept translates more like this: "There is something drastically wrong with the way we are now doing things. If this were not so, the children who go through our classes would not have so much

trouble and demonstrate so many learning difficulties. If we were doing things properly, certainly the little children who have the necessary experiential background would continue to make progress and would not develop academic and behavior problems."

These hypothetical messages are elaborated here, as it is our conviction that our aim of developing a unified early childhood-elementary school program was placed in jeopardy from the outset by these different implicit attitudes called forth from personnel in the two divisions. Therefore, one of our major training aims has been to help us all see our task from the same vantage point.

In a day care school, this is not as easy as it might sound, as it is virtually impossible ever to get everyone together. Our partial solution has been to arrange movies for the children once a week an hour before regular dismissal time so that the bulk of the staff can get together for a Faculty Forum. Teacher aides and the part-time physical education teachers supervise the children during this time. This does not solve the problem of getting teachers and aides together at the same time, but it does at least get the teachers from the lower and upper divisions together.

Topics for this Forum are about evenly divided between sessions in which new ideas are introduced (either by a staff member or an outside speaker) and sessions in which problems are discussed and solutions sought. Because of her own lack of experience in public school settings, the author was unaware of the extent to which this sort of "luxury" was unusual (at least in our community) for elementary teachers. Most schools have faculty meetings only once a month, and these are largely consumed by announcements and discussions of assignments; they are seldom forums for the exchange of ideas. In our meetings we have proceeded from polite listening to a willingness to bring up controversial topics

and to be critical of some aspect of the program. (There must still be some feelings of inferiority on the part of the preparatory teachers, for, while I can think of instances in which an elementary teacher criticized something being done in the preparatory division, I cannot recall any instances of reverse criticism.) These sessions in general have been extremely stimulating and rewarding, so much so that they are now being attended by supervisory personnel from the Little Rock School District and by other interested persons in the community. In addition to these large group sessions, many ad hoc training sessions are arranged throughout the week to make new plans or try to work out problems. Finally, staff training includes the provision of training modules of varying dimensions on request -- e.g., a four-week unit on behavior modification, a ten-week refresher on methods and materials, a semester course on understanding elementary statistics. It has been our goal to arrange for all staff members who participate in these training sessions to receive appropriate university credits for their involvement; to date, however, this has not been possible. It is easier to influence an elementary school than a university!

Although it unpleasantly suggests a "separate but equal" philosophy, the necessity that someone must always mind the store has mandated a different training program for the teacher aides. This is true only of in-service training, incidentally, for in the annual pre-service workshops the entire staff meets as a single body. Our experience has been that, short of having a skilled discussion leader symbolically pull their teeth, the aides will not talk when the training session includes the teachers and other professional staff members. In the Aide's Forum, practical skills have been emphasized, but at the same time they have received an excellent background course in child development. At the time of this writing, the aides themselves are in the process of writing a training manual for others in similar situations.

The remaining major component of our training endeavors involves university students. These are either graduate students who take courses taught by one of the staff members who also hold academic positions in the university, advanced doctoral candidates doing their dissertation research under the guidance of the author, or undergraduate students doing practice teaching. It is only with the last group that our training program is unique and merits description here.

The practice teaching students come to us during their last semester -- after having completed all their foundations and methods courses but often with little or no practical experience in working with children (certainly with no sustained experience). All students declare in advance the grade level (though we are nongraded) with which they prefer to work. In addition to their teaching internship, the students also take with us a nondescript course called "Senior Seminar," intended to be an introduction to the world of the professional teacher.

Obviously the most salient feature of Kramer is the wide age range of children participating in the program. What better environment could one find to help give students that often praised but seldom achieved "developmental orientation"? Thus, even though the students had requested a particular level in advance, we wished to expose them to children throughout the available age range. The two major divisions (preparatory and elementary) were each subdivided again, resulting in four quads: babies-toddlers, three's to five's, primary, upper elementary. Each student elects to major in one of these quads and to minor in another, and each is assigned to all four quads for some period of time during the semester. For the first month the students rotate among the quads, getting to know the children and mainly observing the teachers. During the second month they move into their major classrooms for three days a week

and spend the remaining two days in their minor quad. Their responsibilities are limited, and they mainly carry out assignments given them by the master teachers. In the third month the major-minor division becomes 4:1, and they are given progressively more responsibility both for planning and execution. Their classroom assignments will for the most part be directed toward one or another subgroup of children. In their final month, they are expected to demonstrate their ability to plan daily programs independently, though their plans must still be approved by the master teacher. This gradual build-up of responsibility reaches its culmination during the last two weeks of their assignment, during which time they handle the class independently.

Throughout this time an attempt is made in their seminar to relate their classroom experiences to philosophical and theoretical formulations to which they have been exposed previously (or to which they need exposure). They are videotaped twice during the semester in a microteaching situation, and these tapes are critiqued in the seminar. They also participate in the regular Faculty Forum.

An additional feature of the training regimen is that early in the semester they select one child in the school (not one in their major quad) with whom they form a "big sister" or tutorial relationship. They are expected to get to know this child, meet his family, help him with assigned homework, take him on a special outing, etc. Their experiences with this one child are then written up as a case study -- the traditional child development assignment -- with inferences drawn from what they learn about that child to the kinds of educational experiences that we need to try to provide for similar children.

We have just completed the first semester in which this training program has been implemented; undoubtedly we will make minor changes in the future.

Although the teachers have reservations about its value (they prefer to get a student early in the semester and keep him or her), the students are ecstatic about it. In fact, they are so complimentary that we think something must be wrong -- students are just not that prone to approve things these days. We hope to be able to follow the careers of these young people who have had their initial exposure to the world of teaching via this developmental approach. Only then will we be able to know whether it has accomplished our aims for it.

Dissemination of the Model

There is something very rewarding -- if a bit burdensome -- about involvement in a program that everybody finds intriguing. Such has been our experience at Kramer, for, to be sure, it represents an idea whose time had come just when we got it started. We have no public relations person on the staff but get calls from the local newspapers and television stations asking us what is happening that they might report. Under our official title (The Center for Early Development and Education) we were selected by the National Center for Educational Communication as one of the Model Programs in Childhood Education described in a brochure at the 1970 White House Conference on Children. I have personally described the program to thousands of people all over the country and have written about some aspect of the program for both scientific and popular publications. Our widest and most powerful diffusion came from an article in Parade magazine published early in 1972; the response to that article has to us been almost unbelievable.

During our first two years of operation we have hosted over 2,000 visitors who have seen the program and talked with various members of the staff. We like to think that each of those persons is now an ambassador for the concept. Although we enjoy the visits of other parents in the community who have heard

about Kramer and want the same kind of opportunity for their children, of persons who want jobs, of classes of nurses or home economists or undergraduate teachers or psychiatric residents, we are especially pleased when we have school superintendents, model cities coordinators, Department of Welfare personnel from other states, Four-C coordinators, legislative aides, and others who can directly influence their communities to try to establish such programs in other areas. Their questions are always cogent: How much does it cost per child? (A lot.) How did you get the university and the school district to cooperate? (It was easy.) How do you manage in a building like this? (It isn't easy.) Where do you get your money? (The Office of Child Development mainly, with some from both operating sponsors.) How do you staff the long day? (Stagger the work hours; find some people who can work split shifts if possible.) What would you do differently if you could start all over again? (Either begin with a totally new elementary staff that would not have previously taught in the project school, or else involve all existing staff in the planning from the first stages.) For how long was your grant approved? (Five years.) What will you do when it runs out? (Like Scarlett O'Hara, I'll think about that tomorrow.) Do you offer consultation to other communities that want to try to do this kind of thing? (Have speech, will travel.) They all imply that someone is going to go right home and get to work.

Summary

In this paper I have attempted to present the major features of one prototype of a school for tomorrow which has the good fortune to be in operation today. In the words of my title, it is the kind of school which offers something of value to everybody associated with the endeavor, to the staff no less than to the children and parents. In its program design the

school links together early childhood education and elementary education, education and day care, education and research, and the home and the school. Each of these linkages forms a symbiotic relationship in which eacy component enriches its opposite. Although keeping it all together has not been easy, one could hardly claim that it has been truly difficult.

This description is being written before enough time has elapsed to demonstrate whether the major question posed by the facility can be answered -- viz., can an environment be designed which will provide the experiences necessary to nourish development during the early years and necessary to sustain that development during the years of middle childhood. Therefore, perhaps it would be appropriate to conclude with a paragraph from our original proposal which, better than any we have managed to write since that time, effectively communicates just what it is we are trying to do in the program here described:

> "Before being promoted out of the school, it is hoped that each child will have acquired a love of learning, will know how to adapt to group experience, will have mastered thoroughly the rudiments of reading and mathematics, will have experienced a cultural milieu rich enough to enable him to meet all subsequent school experiences without apology, and will have made substantial progress toward becoming a responsible citizen. Similarly it is hoped that each child's family will have realized that education is not something that is done for a child by a school system but rather is a continuing process in which the child, the parents, the school, and the community work cooperatively toward the goal of further development for all who are involved in the process."

Footnotes

[1] Center for Early Development and Education, College of Education, University of Arkansas, 814 Sherman, Little Rock, Arkansas 72202. The author's work is supported by Grant No. SF-500 from the Office of Child Development, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Although this paper carries a single authorship, the project described represents the work and the ideas of many people, at least some of whom the author would like to mention. Important contributions to the original plans for the project were made by Dr. Irvin L. Ramsey and Dr. Robert M. Roelfs of the University of Arkansas, by Mr. John Fortenberry, Mr. David C. Wallace, and Miss Imogene Hines of the Little Rock School District, and Mr. Lowther Penn of the Arkansas State Department of Education. Within the staff special appreciation is expressed to Dr. Phyllis T. Elardo and Dr. Richard Elardo of the Research Services, to Mrs. Elaine Barton and Mrs. Faustenia Bomar, Principal and Vice-Principal, respectively, of the school, and to Mr. Stephen Lehane, Training Coordinator. The author would also like to acknowledge the contributons of former staff members Dr. Jerry D. Perrin, Mrs. Martha Jane Moose, Mrs. Rosanne Gmuer, and Mr. William S. Parker. Most importantly it should be recognized that the project could not operate a single day without the work of the dedicated teachers, aides, research assistants, supplementary service and clerical personnel. Finally, to the Kramer children and their parents goes my appreciation for remaining such good sports about being visited, interviewed, and innovated. From all of these components has the Kramer model emerged, and without any part the system would break down -- "E pluribus unum."

[2] To appear as a chapter in Braun, S. J., and Edwards, E. P., History and Theory of Early Childhood Education. Worthington, Ohio: Charles A. Jones Co., 1972.

[3] Children's perceptions of operational realities are always interesting. Recently I interviewed a group of our sixth grade children, all of whom had attended before Kramer became a special project school, to find out what they thought about the school. In response to my question, "How is Kramer different now from the way it used to be?" the children gave the following responses in the order given: "We change classes more; we go from room to room; we get to watch TV some; we go on educational trips; the preschool, we got two coaches; we changed the rules from girls playing on the girls' side and boys' on the boys' side to all the kids playing everywhere; the art; day care; and the school is open all summer." No talk about a supportive environment, but they seemed to be picking up the concrete changes that reflect our attempts to develop a more flexible program offering greater freedom to the children.

References

Berman, L. M. New priorities in the curriculum. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1968.

Bloom, B. S. Stability and change in human characteristics. New York: Wiley, 1964.

Bruner, Jerome S. The process of education. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960.

Caldwell, Bettye M. Impact of interest in early cognitive stimulation. In H. E. Rie (Ed.) Perspectives in Child Psychopathology. Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 1971. 293-334.

Caldwell, B. M. "A timid giant grows bolder." Saturday Review, February 20, 1971. 47-49, 65-66.

Caldwell, Bettye M. "The rationale for early intervention." Exceptional Children, 1970, 36: 717-726.

Caldwell, Bettye M. "The usefulness of critical period hypothesis in the study of filiative behavior." Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 1962, 8, 229-242.

Caldwell, B. M., Heider, J., and Kaplan, B. The inventory of home stimulation. Paper presented at the American Psychological Association Meeting. New York, New York. September 1966.

Chilman, C. S. Programs for disadvantaged parents: some major trends and related research. In B. M. Caldwell and H. Ricciati (Eds.) Review of Child Development Research, Vol. III. In Press, University of Chicago Press.

Cremin, L. A. The transformation of the school. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961.

Goodlad, J. I., with Stoephasius, R., and Klein, M. F. The changing school curriculum. New York: Fund for the Advancement of Education, 1966.

Gordon, E. W., and Wilkerson, D. A. Compensatory education for the disadvantaged. New York: College Entrance Examination Board, 1966.

Hunt, J. McV. Intelligence and experience. New York: Ronald Press, 1961.

Hunt, J. McV. The psychological basis for using preschool enrichment as an antidote for cultural deprivation. Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 1964, 10 209-248.

Karnes, M. B. Research and development program on preschool disadvantaged children. Final Report, Project No. 5-1181, Bureau of Research, Office of Education, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1969.

Schaefer, R. J. The school as a center of inquiry. New York: Harper and Row, 1967.

Silberman, C. E. Crisis in the classroom. New York: Random House, 1970.

Wachs, T., Uzgiris, I., and Hunt, J. McV. Cognitive development in infants of different age levels and from different environmental backgrounds: an exploratory investigation. Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 1971, 17, 283-317.

Westinghouse Learning Corporation/Ohio University. The impact of Head Start: an evaluation of the effects of Head Start on children's cognitive and affective development. June, 1969.